

Philosophy of Education
Miranda Shurtleff

“A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning” –Brad Henry

Throughout my college career I have changed my major four times, and switched schools twice. This all came because I felt as though none of these were exactly the right fit for me. I also wanted to dabble my hand in multiple things, because one is just never enough in my twisted multitasking head. I always stayed in a health area but changed from physical therapy to athletic training, to community health now to health education. I finally now know that I have found my one true passion. Not in a million of years would I have ever thought of becoming a teacher, I hated school from day one and have had so many bad experiences with my teachers and at school. I thought about it long and hard, but after a while of thinking and talking things over to myself I finally said: “I don’t want any other kids to go through school and not learn anything, especially when they are truly there to learn, just no one is helping them” I have seen so many kids fall through the cracks at school, and I think if the content was more relatable or they had more options none of it would of ever happened.

I selected teaching as my profession, because I believe that I am very good at connecting with people, and after all the teachers I had that just lectured at me, and made me hate school, I wanted to find a way to change that for everyone

else. I changed my major multiple times, until now, where I feel like I am finally where I belong and have found my fit. In school I could have been a very good student, but because I had teachers that would put me down and never teach to my learning style, or apply any of the knowledge to my life, I hated it. I want to be the teacher that everyone wants to go to, to help with work, to talk to and expect to have fun in class. I may not be able to change everyone's attitude about school but I am going to try, to make it relatable as I can to every student's life.

The teachers that really captured me, and made actually interested in school, were the teachers who genuinely cared about me. Teachers that would try and connect with me, on subjects other than school work. They would ask me how my game went, or about my afterschool activities or things going on in the community. These are the things that really started to get my attention. This will be the first thing that I will do in my class. By using an MI quiz/ personality quiz I can get to know my students and what they are all about, this will help me connect on a different level besides just schoolwork. Another trait a teacher can have, is being flexible. Many times when I was at my game until 1130 at night it was hard to get my homework done, I really respected and appreciated a teacher that would talk to me and give me an extension because they know that life happens and that things can get busy. I know that classes do still need to have structure but that they do not need to be set in stone, otherwise kids will lose respect, because the teacher does not give them any in return.

I've had so many bad experiences with teachers and I hope to get every kid to enjoy being at school and doing something. I want every kid to graduate and do what they want and be happy with their choices, this can mean college, or a trade school, or obtaining a trade from high school. I want students to trust me and to come with me for help. I want to be that person there for them throughout their life and to make sure they achieve what they want to.

When I teach I hope to gain every kids respect for not only me but for the school, community, and the subject. School can be so much more than just a 6 hour "detention center". I believe that every kid can find a way to be involved somehow and learn to love what they are doing. It is my job to find that way, and help every teacher do this, to create the best school atmosphere possible. I also want to find new ways to teach health and physical education that is not just learning about sports and diseases, but is tailored to each kid's own life, and that they can take this with them and use it when they are older. It takes a small step like this to help the different epidemics in America and I am bound to try to help it.

My philosophy on education involves being very flexible, relaxed, and to be there to facilitate learning for my students through helping them create their own experiences. I want learning to be hands on, real world application so that learning is not see as a pointless thing to them. **Classroom Organization** is a

huge part of making an open environment and allowing the kids to work the best. In my class It will be very open to seating, it will not be assigned but some days might include a horseshoe shape, some might include small groups of desk, but 99% of the time the desk will be together for them to learn from one another, because that is the best way to learn from each other. I will have basic rules of respect for myself and the other students, but the students are also able to suggest anything to add to that, as long as there is a mutual respect for myself and other classmates. My room will always be an open door policy for kids to come in and do work or get help. **Motivation** is a huge factor in the classroom, not only do I want my students to be motivated, I want to be motivated every day to come in and have the best class. I will instill this into my students by allowing them to really study what they want, and be completely involved in that process. When the students have say in what they want to learn, and are actually interested in it, they become much more motivated to learn and do the work. They will have the freedom to discover whatever they would like into a unit. I want them to make real world connections, have fun and make they're learning a good experience. **Content Area** will be standard every year for all the categories that are supposed to be studied, such as nutrition, exercise physiology, stress, alcohol and drug abuse, sex ed, family relationships and learning styles. But within each of these unit it is wide open to interpretation by the students, they can take each unit as far as they would like, I

am completely open to allowing them to think outside the box, and doing things like an agriculture project for nutrition. I will provide the students with a syllabus in the beginning of the year that shows a rough outline and after asking each of them what they want to learn about in each unit and also allowing for different routes in each unit it will really direct where the class will go.

Assessments will be mostly a presentation or some sort of hands on activity that shows that they were able to take the content knowledge from the whole unit and apply it to the real world and they know what they are talking about.

Assessments will also be determined after the students pick what they would like to do, as well as each of their learning styles. I will always allow for more than one form of assessment, and never pass out a paper test because that is not doing a single person a favor. **Classroom Climate** goes along with my

classroom organization and motivation for my students. I will have open doors at all time, and they are allowed to come to me for anything, I want everyone participating and saying ideas out loud so that it sparks something amongst the rest of the students, and this may also influence in which direction we take our class for the rest of the unit. I will also always allow for students to come in after class to talk, or learn, or do what they would like in my classroom, I want them to feel safe and feel like they have a place to go. **Learning Focus** will include anything they want, and I will fit it to a standard, if they are really interested in a topic I will try to integrate it in and tie it to something we will be doing, as well

as a standard they need to reach instead of telling the students that we don't have enough time to do it. Each year will be different as well as each class. To keep it interesting for the students as well as me. **Technology integration** These students will have grown up with technology so they already know how to use it. Technology will not be a forefront in my class. I like technology when it aids education, but I feel as though a lot of time it can be a hindrance. If it cuts down on time for taking notes, or helps with a assignment, or allows a student to be more creative then I will definitely be in favor. I will always incorporate some sort of technology but I will also be conscious of who has internet at home to do assignments and allow them in class time to be able to complete what they need to. **Teacher and Leadership Style** as a person in general and as well as a teacher, I am very Type A and have strong leadership abilities. I do not like being a follower, I have to at least put my ideas out there, and facilitate in some way. I take directions well but avoid roles in which I'm a sheep following along the rest. I'm a very hands-on, go get them person and expect my students to do the same for their learning, if they want to learn something they need to take the initiative to go out and do it and I will help every step of the way. I believe highly in teaching them life lessons, because school should be coordinated with the outside world as much as possible.

I completely in vision myself being in the new wave of education, I am tired of seeing the same old way of teaching that doesn't work. Which every teacher probably says when they get their degree so it's probably very cliché. But I am a very motivated, go get what I want type of person and do not want to see what I had for my education. I want to see more integrated curriculum to get more of the kids interested in the school work as well as make it more applicable to them across disciplines. I want children excited to go to school, because of the material they will be learning will be applicable to their lives. I want to see more tech programs being implemented and pushed for students, many do not do it, because it's not on the direct line to college, but college should not be only thing in mind for students, it should be improving their knowledge, and becoming an active part of society so that they can do something to mark their spot on this earth.

I want to start to see the push away from college so that children can also gain a tech degree, or some experience so if they do not go to college they will be able to do something in their life and be proud of taking advantage of that in high school. By bringing all of these things together, I hope to allow all students the opportunities they wish to seek. I want to make school a learning environment and that means more than just sitting in a classroom remembering a bunch of useless facts that will mean nothing to them in life. I want to be that teacher that the students can go to, even if It's not my subject of expertise, and

the person they still visit after they have gone off into the world.

After taking the philosophy of Education class at UMF I then learned about the different types of teaching styles and exactly where I fit on this spectrum. I found out that I am both a mix of pragmatism and existentialism. Both of these types of teaching styles are very student orientated, and gives a great deal of flexibility, which I believe I have already stated in my philosophy statement thus far. I am really there to assist the students get to their potential and to get them the help they need to find out the information they want to learn about, and if I cannot to find the resources to help them in another way. After reading about these two types of learning styles it really just verified what I wanted to do in my classroom as well as myself as a person. I believe that it is very important to facilitate learning, not lead the whole band to what you want. Pragmatism and existentialism also states the importance of integrated curriculum as well as alternative schools being an option for students. I think that every single school should have these options for students. I considered myself a smart student, but believe that I could of learned better and had a lot more fun in a school that was an alternative school, where I was doing real world things that actually applied to something. I believe that everyone should at least have the opportunity and would like to create less of stigma around these alternative types of schools. A lot of kids see the kids that go to these schools as “dumb” or not making it in regular school. But in fact they are just as smart but

can learn better in a hands on way.

I think that my philosophy on education will definitely start a stir in whatever school I am to start out with. I don't think that other teachers will be used to this type of teaching, and I think that the students will respond very well to it, and other teachers may not like it. I hope to eventually impact other teachers and students who have been doing things to actually hinder other students learning instead of helping it, like a teacher should be doing. I think being young with all these ideas it would be hard to get along with some of the other teachers that are set in their own ways, but eventually they will see that it actually works out. Students should respond better all-around to how my classroom will be set up, to my policy on homework and responsibility that they will have. They should then be able to see school and education completely different. I hope this is their view in the end, since that is all I ever wanted in my school education.

As you can see in my first quote and in the rest of paper, I will always put the students first and tailor everything to the way they want to learn, and what they want to get out of the class. I am there for them, and that is not only for school, but as well as any other needs they need for life, and beyond their schooling.

